

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TAIPEI 03925 220850Z
ACTION EA-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 03925

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, TW
SUBJECT: CH'EN CHU

REF: STATE 157528

1. EMBASSY HAS BEEN CLOSELY FOLLOWING CASE OF MISS CH'EN CHU (REFTEL). AS OF JUNE 22 SHE WAS STILL IN HIDING FOLLOWING THE SEARCH OF HER HOUSE BY POLICE OFFICIALS. NEITHER HER CLOSE ASSOCIATES NOR GROG OFFICIALS, BOTH OF WHOM HAVE CONTACTED THE EMBASSY REGARDING MISS CH'EN, ADMIT TO KNOWING OF HER PRESENT WHEREABOUTS.

2. ON JUNE 17 MOFA OFFICIAL CHANG HSIAO-YEN INFORMED EMBASSY OFFICER OF SEARCH OF CH'EN CHU'S RESIDENCE WHICH TOOK PLACE ON JUNE 16. HE INDICATED AT THAT TIME THAT CH'EN'S WHEREABOUTS WAS UNKNOWN AND THAT HE SUSPECTED SHE WAS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE. ON JUNE 20 CHANG TELEPHONED EMBOFF SPECIFICALLY TO INQUIRE WHETHER MISS CH'EN HAD CONTACTED THE EMBASSY TO REQUEST POLITICAL ASYLUM. (NOTE: DURING THAT DAY TWO GARRISON COMMAND UNMARKED CARS WERE POSTED IN FRONT OF THE EMBASSY.) WE INFORMED CHANG THAT THE EMBASSY WAS AWARE OF CH'EN'S CASE BUT SHE HAD NOT REPEAT NOT REQUESTED ASYLUM.

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3. EMBASSY OBTAINED COPY OF POLICE REPORT OF SEARCH OF CH'EN CHU'S RESIDENCE CONDUCTED BY TAIPEI MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT POLICE (BELIEVED TO BE LED BY GARRISON COMMAND AS IS PATTERN IN SEARCHES OF POLITICAL SUSPECTS). MOST POTENTIALLY DAMAGING ENTRIES ON SEARCH REPORT APPEAR TO BE DISCOVERY OF A DOCUMENT IN HER POSSESSION IN WHICH THE AUTHOR (UNKNOWN) INDICATED CH'EN WAS

"FALSELY ACCUSED BY KMT OF FAILING TO REPORT LIU HSIAO-YING AS A CCP AGENT" AND CLAIM THAT CH'EN WAS IN POSSESSION OF SEVERAL THOUSAND "REACTIONARY PAPERS." THESE CHARGES WOULD PRESUMABLY BE SUFFICIENT GROUNDS FOR CH'EN'S ARREST AT ANY TIME, ALTHOUGH FOR REASONS AS YET UNCLEAR SHE WAS NOT ARRESTED AT THE TIME OF THE SEARCH. NOTE: EMBASSY IS POUCHING COPY OF SEARCH REPORT AND PARTIAL TRANSLATION. OUR FILES CONTAIN NO INFORMATION REGARDING LIU HSIAO-YING.

4. COMMENT: CH'EN'S SITUATION IS BEING OPENLY DISCUSSED BY HER OPPOSITIONIST FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES, LOCAL NEWSPAPER REPORTERS AND GROC AUTHORITIES. WE DOUBT THAT HER CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH CONTROVERSIAL LOCAL POLITICIANS (AND KUO YU-HSIN) OR HER INTENTION OF RUNNING IN THE FALL ELECTIONS WOULD IN THEMSELVES HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT TO PROMPT THE GROC TO CLAMP DOWN ON HER. HER ASSOCIATES BELIEVE THAT SHE HAS BEEN SINGLED OUT FOR SEARCH AND PERHAPS ARREST NOT BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT THINKS SHE IS A COMMUNIST, BUT BECAUSE SHE IS THE MOST OUTSPOKEN OF THE MAINSTREAM OPPOSITIONISTS AND DOES NOT HAVE THE PARTIAL PROTECTION OF HOLDING SOME OFFICE. WE THINK ALSO THAT HER WORK WITH STUDENTS AND OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE MAY HAVE PROMPTED SPECIAL GOVERNMENT/KMT DISPLEASURE.

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5. WE BELIEVE THAT THE GROC IS FULLY AWARE OF THE IMPACT OF THE ACTIONS TAKEN AGAINST MISS CH'EN ON ATTITUDES OF OPPOSITIONISTS, SOME OF WHOM HAVE SPECULATED THAT THE SEARCH OF HER HOME MIGHT MARK THE BEGINNING OF A GENERAL GROC CRACKDOWN ON NON-KMT POLITICIANS. WE CONSIDER IT TOO EARLY TO COME TO SUCH A CONCLUSION SINCE MISS CH'EN IS PRETTY MUCH IN A CLASS BY HERSELF. HOWEVER, THE SEARCH COULD BE THE FIRST STEP IN A GROC EFFORT TO MAKE CLEAR THE GROUND RULES FOR OPPOSITION EFFORTS BETWEEN NOW AND THE FALL ELECTIONS.

6. EMBASSY ALSO DOES NOT KNOW CH'EN'S PRESENT WHEREABOUTS OR PLANS. IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT SHE MAY ATTEMPT TO FLEE TO JAPAN VIA FISHING BOAT IN AN ESCAPE SIMILAR TO THAT AFFECTED BY WU MING-HUI AND CHANG CHIN-TSE (REF. TAIPEI 3163). IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT CH'EN MIGHT CONTACT EMBASSY WITH REQUEST FOR ASYLUM, HOWEVER WE HAVE NO INDICATION OF THIS APART FROM MOFA'S INQUIRY. WE WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THIS CASE CLOSELY AND REPORT DEVELOPMENTS AS THEY BECOME KNOWN. UNGER

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